778
643 placed in the hut called rwimiringa (lit., house of copper objects (2),

2. Kalinga means "royal drum"; Karinga means "small copper object."

[727] built inside the king's boma, where the war trophies are kept. The Kalinga is guarded night and day, for it is the emblem of the grandeur of the kings of Ruanda.

4. The Court of the Mwami

644 At Nyanza, the royal residence (ibgami), flocks of people of every rank come to attend court or to inform the Mwami of the affairs of their region: Bahutu or even Batwa villagers hoping to obtain some benefit from the Mwami or his mother, dignitaries of various ranks and functions, and servants of both sexes (3).

[114]

3. These duties and functions have been minutely described by the Rev. Father Pagès in his fine book, Un Royaume hamite au centre de l'Afrique [A Hamite Kingdom in the Center of Africa] (ed. I.R.C.B. [Institut Royal Colonial Belge], Brussels, 1933). This work constitutes a veritable and priceless monument for the knowledge of Ruanda and its people. We cannot do better than suggest that the reader refer to it for everything concerning the organization of the Royal Court.

5. The Council of Ministers

645
787 In serious circumstances, such as war or famine, the Mwami is obliged to convene the great chiefs (abatware b'intebe) in council (inima). The soothsayers (abapfuma) then consult the oracles and

645 787 according to their answers indicate the decision to be made.

[90] 6. The Intore

644 861 The Mwami's prestige requires him to have a group of intore who constitute a corps of pages. Their creation goes back to Mwami Ruganzu. They were then called the "intrepid ones" (1). The intore

1. Ibisumizi, from gusumira, "to carry off by force."

are the sons of the intebe and abachibiri chiefs as well as of the Mwami's abagaragu. A father who did not send his child to the king's Court to become an intore would imply that he did not love the Mwami and would regret it. Usually when they are igimbi (about ten years old) the young boys are brought to Nyanza where they remain until they are men. They learn to fight, jump, and dance. At the same time they get their political education, learning the legendary traditions and customs of the country as well as the rules of courtesy. The intore camp on a hill not far from the Mwami's residence and meet morning and evening for their exercises.

644 292 At festival time, the intore wear a special garment. Their loins are girt with a leopardskin (inkindi), and they wear round their heads a band (umugara) decorated with inkomo fur (black, white-collared monkey called Colobus) which is held by imiroto going down their cheeks. They wear a necklace (igitako) round their necks and [535] others as shoulder belts (inzibanye). They dance holding a bow (umuheto) in one hand and a spear (ichumu) in the other; small iron bells are attached to their ankles.

7. The Inyambo

231 Ruanda can be called Igihugu chy'inka n'ingoma (the country of the cow and the royal drum). Horned cattle, the principal wealth of the Batutsi, is cared for with a love approaching veneration.

631 districts in the area adjoining Ruanda and Ussuwi. They still pay a set amount of tribute in natural produce to the king, but otherwise they may do, or not do, whatever they please unless they disturb the peace or necessitate the military intervention of our Resident.

As a rule the king or the princely governor will not make alternations in the conditions of feudal tenure if the vassal regularly sends his tribute, keeps his subjects in timorous dependence, promptly contributes the necessary groups of men in case of war, and remains subservient and loyal to the king.

[624] Finally, in the different villages and hamlets there are communal officials (bisonga) who are responsible to the batwale; they collect the taxes, arrange for corvée labor, and are in charge of petty jurisdiction, etc.

645 When discussing important matters, the king, also the
634 provincial governors, and the batwale, are assisted by a state council or a communal council, respectively. These councils are appointed by the king or by the governor, as the case may be, and are chosen from among the most respected and most prosperous men of the country or of the region. Represented among them particularly are the clan elders (abagabo). The council is convened on important occasions, and the king or the mutwale presides, but in his decisions the king or the mutwale is not bound by the advice of the council (No. 19, p. 267). The

634 batwale are responsible to the king for everything that happens
641 in their administrative district. They also have almost absolute power over the Bahutu and Batwa population which they administer. This includes the power of execution. It is true that subjects suppressed by an unjust mutwale may appeal to the provincial governor or to the king, but they obtain satisfaction only very seldom, for "the tsar is far away and the sky is high." [91]

643 The absolute ruler, the semidivine king is, of course, always
641 right and has every privilege; he owns all the land and all the cattle, and he vests with it whomever he chooses, whenever he chooses, and in amounts that he alone decides, and he may take any subject's life or property as he pleases.

643 These are the conditions, de jure and de facto, whenever
631 the king is a man of strong will, and there has been a whole

7: Roscoe M-5 (1919-1920) 1924
FO42 Rundi FO42

762 When a man committed suicide, he was buried as usual;
766 but a medicine-man was summoned to tell by augury whether
787 the house had to be deserted or was still fit to live in.

RELIGION

773 I received a statement respecting the religion of the Batuse
[115] from Captain Phillips, the District Commissioner. They were,
[776] he said, monotheistic and had a chief priest who was initiated
into his office by a journey up a certain mountain where there
[778] was said to be a flock of sheep sacred to the god. This was a
[782] dangerous exploit, but before a man was accepted as priest
he had to go there with a sheep, which he offered to the god.

This chief priest kept all the fetishes and carried out all religious observances for the king, who kept neither fetishes nor priests about him. When there was any illness or other trouble, the king sent a bull, a sheep, or a fowl (in the case of
[787] war, a bull, a ram, or a cock) to the priest, and an augury was taken from the flow of blood and from the markings on the lungs and intestines.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE KING

The kings of Ruanda—government and taxation by the king—food of the king—wives of the king—heir to the king—death of the king—mourning—burial—accession—the king's mother and her brother

643 THE list of the kings of Ruanda was given as follows: Kigwa,
173 who came from heaven—his son, Kimanuke, who begat Randa — Merano — Kobo — Gihanga — Kalyaruanda — Ruganza — Kirimu — Kigeri — Mutabazi — Gahima — Ndahiru — Ndole — Muhenzi — Namuhesera — Sekalongoro — Huhi — Kirima — Ndabalasa — Mubamwhe — Gahiridirwa — Lwogera — Lwabugiri — Lutariridwa, who was killed by his brother Musinga, who still reigns.

692 The king's court was the court of appeal for all his subjects
645 and his council was composed of the high chiefs.

8: Hall G-5 (1929-31) 1938 FO42 Rundi FO42

suggestions there are of the effect of latter-day conceptions in superimposing themselves upon and modifying primitive law. Before going on to this, it should be added (what does not appear from the record) first, that the society of Bugufi is symbiotic, with a pastoral Tusi aristocracy, headed by a chief, dominating a semi-servile Hutu agricultural population, who largely outnumber the Tusi: secondly, that there have in Bugufi been strong forces making for change, quite apart from European administrative control. To go into these changes in detail is quite outside the scope of the present paper. It may be briefly mentioned, however, that the relative status of Tusi and Hutu is in process of rapid alteration, owing to the opportunities afforded to the Hutu under modern conditions of acquiring independent wealth, both through their labour (chiefly in Uganda) and latterly by the establishment in Bugufi of an economic crop, coffee. This change has meant maladjustment of the tribal structure. The chief sees in the economic independence of the Hutu an encroachment on his rights: and the Hutu regard the assertion of those rights as oppression. This conflict, together with the mental immaturity of the chief and the distance of the chiefdom—four days' march—from an administrative station, made it necessary for the government to establish a check in the form of a 'Native Adviser'. This system continued until early 1930, by which time an administrative station had been opened near the chief's head-quarters, and, he having shown signs of development, it was felt that an opportunity should be afforded the chief of ruling his country without the restriction of an adviser who was really a controller most of the time. These advisers, three in all, were alien to Bugufi. The first came from Bukoba, on Lake Victoria, where he later became town headman: the second was of Arab descent, having come from Urundi to live in Bugufi, where he had been settled for many years and enjoyed considerable respect: the last, a native of really fine character, who made every effort to train the chief for his work, was a Muziba from Bukoba District. All of them were charged with the dispensing of justice according to native law and custom—subject to altered concepts of crime, already imposed by the European régime, and to a general instruction to curb the oppressiveness of the chief, an instruction the interpretation of which might depend partly on the system of native law under which the adviser had been brought

8: Hall G-5 (1929-31) 1938 FO42 Rundi FO42

up, partly on the personality of the administrative officer of the day, and partly on his own judgement. In any event, conflict with the indigenous system at some points was to be expected, together with permanent modifications to give expression to the alteration of the status of the Hutu.

THE SYSTEM OF MARRIAGE IN BUGUFI

(*as disclosed by Native Court records*)

The normal precedent to marriage is formal betrothal, which must be effected by members of a woman's family, and a contract which she makes herself or through unauthorized persons is void.

Instances: A girl goes to a neighbour, who takes her to the man of her choice and offers her in marriage, the offer being accepted and bride-wealth being paid. Her father is sued for refusing to give the girl in marriage and wins the case, the neighbour who received the bride-wealth being ordered to refund it.

A man sues another for seducing his sister. The defence is that he and she agreed to marry. The Court finds that there could be no agreement since there were no witnesses of any kind, much less the woman's mother or brother who ought to have been present.

But there is a case of this rule being overridden by a wealthy man.

A man, brought to Court by a woman's guardian for seducing her, says that he wishes to marry her and considered himself wealthy enough to dispense with the usual preliminaries, and in any case did not know who her relatives were. He is fined, but is permitted to pay bride-wealth and marry the woman. The Court adds that the fine would have been larger had not the woman expressed her desire to marry the man.

The neighbour cited above who acted as the woman's agent had only to refund the bride-wealth which he had received: but in another case a man was imprisoned for enticing away a woman and giving her in marriage without her father's knowledge or consent.

Betrothal is only binding for a reasonable time.

Instances: A woman having been betrothed and the man having delayed to come to complete the marriage, her father marries her off to another man and refunds the bride-wealth.

A woman is betrothed to one man and married off to another. It is found that the former has been looking for bride-wealth for eight years, and he is held to have no justification for claiming the woman.

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951)1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

643 534 The symbol of kingship was Kalinga, the sacred drum. To possess this drum meant to be king. Kalinga was regularly sprinkled with the blood of the animals used for divination. Around Kalinga were hung the genitals of Ruanda enemies killed by the bami. Kalinga was never beaten but other drums were beaten in its honour as they were beaten for the king.[38]

(*b*) *The queen-mother*

644 It was essential that the role of queen-mother (*umugabekasi*) should always be fulfilled. If the mwami's mother's death occurred when her son was still living, he had to be given another 'mother'. The queen-mother had no special task, but she shared the royal prerogatives. She lived at the king's capital where she had her own court, and her protection was eagerly sought. She had herds of cattle and clients. But her role should not be regarded as independent of that of the king.

It can be said that the same kingship was realized by two persons at the same time, without any division of responsibilities or privileges. This was expressed by the term often used to designate together the mwami and his mother: the kings (*abami*). In that partnership the king, however, kept a predominant position: when he died, his mother completely lost her powers.

(*c*) *The biru*

645 [193] The *biru* did not constitute a council or a board. They were dignitaries with different tasks and very strictly ranked in a fixed hierarchy. Their activities, however, in common were concerned [196] with the preservation of ritual knowledge and the accomplishment of ceremonies essential to the existence of Ruanda and its government. This knowledge and activities were kept secret from everybody who was not a *mwiru* (singular of *biru*).

[643] *Biru* were under the king's authority in the sense that he could create new offices of *mwiru* and he could dismiss one of them who had been disloyal. The royal control was limited to this. It was really the minimum without which *biru* would have been completely independent of the mwami. The offices were hereditary and even when a *mwiru* had been dismissed one of his sons succeeded him. As we have seen previously, their domains were exempt from any interference of the land- or cattle-chief.

[38] Vanhove, 1941, pp. 88 f. See the series of photographs in Maquet, 1957.

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951) 1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

The most important *biru* were the three to whom the king communicated the name of his successor and the recommendations he wanted them to transmit to the new king later. There were about a dozen main *biru* offices. These important *biru* had assistants from their lineages, prospective successors whom they gradually trained in order that the oral traditions should not be lost.

Biru had to memorize secret rules, governing for instance the order according to which queens would be chosen from different descent groups, the ritual to observe in case of spreading of cattle disease, lack of abundance of rain, warlike ceremonies, celebrations of the sorghum harvests, &c.

The *biru* institution safeguarded the interests of the great Tutsi descent groups. This function appears clearly in the determination made for several reigns in advance of the secondary lineages and clans from which the queens should be successively chosen. The *biru*, as representatives of their kinship groups had, as it were, established the order in which the interests of different clans and lineages would be favoured in turn.

No one *mwiru* knew the entire body of customs. That knowledge was divided into parts, the remembering of each being entrusted to a *mwiru*, that is to say a descent group, as the office was hereditary. In this way it may be said that the exclusive knowledge of a part of the most important Ruanda ritual had become almost the property of each great Tutsi descent group.

A second function of the *biru* institution was to secure the continuity and the prevalence of the tradition which could have been endangered by the very considerable powers of the king. That traditional body was not unlike a constitution in a modern state and the *biru* institution could be said to have had a role similar to that of a supreme court judging whether a new rule is compatible with the fundamental charter of the country. Of course they had explicitly neither such a task nor such institutionalized means to prevent the mwami from establishing new rules, but the disapproval of an innovation by the *biru* was not to be taken lightly as they represented the great Tutsi kinship groups.

To assess more exactly the function of this institution, one should know more about it. The present day *biru* are still very reluctant to provide information and still less to let it be published, in spite of the encouragement to do so that they receive from the king.[24]

[24] See Kagame, 1947a.

9:Maquet E-5 (1949-1951)1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

(*d*) *The council of the high chiefs*

645 The most important chiefs were called *batware w'intebe*, which means chiefs with a stool. Sometimes, especially in times of crisis, the king summoned them and they were consulted on the situation.[27]

645 643 It seems that the patterns of behaviour in the face-to-face relationships with an authority, particularly the supreme one, were such that an opinion opposed to that of the mwami was very unlikely to be voiced. Consequently, the main use of that council appears to have been for the king to explain what he wanted to do and to elicit suggestions on the means of carrying it out.

One of these chiefs was called the 'favourite counsellor' and acted as a sort of prime minister to the king. Besides the tasks he fulfilled by helping the mwami in administering the kingdom, the favoured counsellor's role included the most useful function of taking the blame for what the mwami did wrong. As the king was divine and essentially good, he could never be criticized even by those who suffered from one of his decisions. To relieve the tensions raised by an arbitrary action of the king, however, it was better that the responsibility for it could be imputed to somebody else. The favourite counsellor was that scapegoat: the victims of a royal decision and their friends could go on saying that the king was good but that his favourite counsellor was very bad and cruel and responsible for what they had suffered. This aspect of the favourite counsellor's role was no small contribution to the feelings of trust that Ruanda had for their ruler.

[27] Maquet and Hertefelt, 1959, chap. 1.